

The Grapenvine

U.S. Naval Hospital
Okinawa, Japan
A Family-Centered Care Facility



U.S. NAVAL HOSPITAL
OKINAWA, JAPAN

Fall 2012

Making Preparations

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CAMP FOSTER—Workers continue to prepare the new hospital on Camp Foster for occupancy in early 2013. Photos: (top) Workers prepare a protective cocoon inside the hospital to protect walls, floors and fittings from damage while furniture and equipment are installed and assembled; (center) External view of the new bachelor enlisted quarters; (bottom) main entrance and flagpole area of the main hospital; (background) workers stand next to the Pharmacy service windows just off of the hospital's lobby waiting area. (All photos courtesy USNH Transition Team) See more photos of the new hospital facility on Page 9.

Notes from the Captain's Desk

Captain Pius A. Aiyelawo, Commanding Officer, U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa

Welcome to our Fall 2012 Grapevine Issue. By mid January 2013, we'll begin the first phase of our relocation to Camp Foster. The new 86 Bed, 443,000 Square Feet, doubles our current treatment facility which was originally commissioned in 1958 as U.S. Army Hospital Ryukyu Islands. The facility transferred from the U.S. Army to the U.S. Navy on Feb. 28, 1977 and was commissioned as a Naval Regional Medical Center. Our new hospital will represent the leading edge in medical facility design and embody our continued commitment to patient and family centered care.

This project has indeed been a long time coming with the initial design starting in May 2009, but we are much more prepared for the transition into a safe and state -of -the -art hospital complex. It is truly a beautiful complex with significant operational improvements and I think our staff and patients are going to be very pleased. Staff tours are being scheduled for late Oct/Nov 2012 to help our shipmates/staff become more familiar with their new surroundings prior to the move.



My thanks to our Transition Leader Team – Cmdr. Cather, Lt. Ayeni, and HMCS Wood for their ongoing efforts to ensure a seamless relocation to our new hospital. I would also like to express my thanks to other shipmates/staff and our military community for your engagement, support, and trust in us as we execute our transition goals and continue our journey of improving safety, quality and experience of care. In the time remaining for our transition, I ask that you continue to stay engaged and help when fellow shipmates/staff need a hand and communicate any problems or challenges as soon as they are spotted.

Finally, please join me in welcoming back our shipmates from their successful deployments to Bahrain, "Gitmo", Afghanistan, and Pacific Partnership 2012. Congratulations for a Job Well Done!

Thank you again for what you do every day to care for all those entrusted to us and I am truly honored to serve as your Commanding Officer.

CMC: Single Sailor Program here for you

CMDCM Hosea Smith, Command Master Chief, U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa

Shipmates, where has the time gone? We are close to closing out another great year. Over the next four months, leading up to January 2013, we are all going to be extremely busy as we make final preparations for the transition to the new hospital. Are you wondering how this will affect you, the junior enlisted Sailor? Are you worried or stressed thinking about the long hours that may be involved with such a big move?

Well, I think I have the answer for you! We all need a way to unwind, spend some time away from work, and have a sense of normalcy. The USNH Single Sailor program is exactly what you need. The Single Sailor Program is designed to improve your Quality of Life and get you involved in a wide variety of recreational and community service events. As a single Sailor you will be involved in the planning of recreation activities, special events, classes, trips and a wide variety of outdoor activities designed to meet your specific needs. In order to make this program successful, we need your involvement and your ideas. HM2 Tindle and the other members of the Single Sailor program are standing by waiting to hear from you. This program is yours, so please spread the word to get your shipmates involved. Being overseas is no easy task; it is difficult to be away



from friends and family. But the Single Sailor program is here for you.

As I touched on earlier, we are transitioning to our new hospital in January. This means a brand new barracks for you, and I think all of you will be pleased with your (soon to be) new home. Your Quality of Life and living conditions will improve. I understand privacy is an issue with your current barracks, but you will not have to worry about that in your new barracks. Every Sailor will have an individual room with plenty of storage space. Professional movers will be contracted to conduct your bar-

racks move, so you don't have to worry about trying to load your 52-inch television into the back of your car.

I need you to think of this as a PCS move as you get your personal items together. If you have important documents that you don't want packed, please place them to the side. As during any PCS move, planning and preparation will help ensure that things go smoothly.

In closing, I'm very humbled and proud to be your Command Master Chief. I'm amazed every day by your professionalism and phenomenal work ethic. Thank you for what you do, and for being outstanding shipmates and Sailors.

XO's Perspective: Maintaining our reputation

Captain Rick Freedman, Executive Officer, U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa

Greetings Team Okinawa. It has been an exciting two months for me as I transitioned into my role as your Executive Officer. While I have made many observations during this period, the one word that comes to mind is: WOW! I have been absolutely impressed at every turn with the level of exceptional care and service being delivered at U. S. Naval Hospital Okinawa. We truly have an incredible and dedicated team of professionals providing outstanding care and support to the most deserving patients in the world – our Operational Forces, their families, and those who support them. This Hospital has earned an incredible reputation throughout the Pacific and beyond to all corners of Navy Medicine. I now know why.

Our incredible reputation, however, is not only a tribute, but it is also a great responsibility that we must never take lightly. Each day our great team



of active duty, GS civilians, contractors, MLC staff and Red Cross volunteers come together – One team, one fight - with all hands working toward one common purpose; the delivery of safe and quality care to our beneficiaries. Indeed, all the clinical and administrative bench-

marks that we use to measure quality and safety, such as the National Surgical Quality Improvement Program, National Committee for Quality Assurance and Enterprise Safety Application Management System bear witness to the exceptional care we provide at our facility. To maintain this standard of excellence however, we have to be vigilant, we have to be proactive, we have to stand tall and vow "Not on my Watch!".

Safety and quality is a journey, not a destination and requires each of us to be on guard every moment of every day for every patient. Each one of us has a vital job to do and we must

have the courage to speak up if we see something that doesn't seem right. We must all go that extra mile to ensure everything is in place to facilitate exceptional care.

Each of us brings a different perspective and different skill set to the team, all critical and none more important than the other. All working seamlessly, alert and engaged, and willing to stand tall and make sure that the patients entrusted to our care are provided the same exceptional level of care and support that is the hallmark of U. S. Naval Hospital Okinawa.

With the upcoming move to our new facility, there will be new challenges ahead but even greater opportunities as we begin operations at our new state-of-the-art medical treatment facility. Our transition will require each one of us to be individual guardians of quality care and patient safety. Demanding job? Absolutely. But I can think of no better team to make it happen.

The Grapevine

*An authorized publication of
U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa, Japan*

Capt. Pius A. Aiyelawo, MSC, USN
Commanding Officer

Capt. Rick Freedman, DC, USN
Executive Officer

CMDCM (EXW/SW/FMF) Hosea Smith
Command Master Chief

Mr. Brian J. Davis
Public Affairs Officer

Ms. Kiyomi Williams
Community Relations Specialist

The Grapevine, published by the U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa Public Affairs Office, is an authorized publication for members of the military service. Contents and views expressed in the Grapevine are not necessarily endorsed by the United States Government, Department of Defense or the United States Navy.

U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa
Public Affairs Office
PSC 482
FPO AP 96362
DSN 643-7294
nhokipao@med.navy.mil

Visit our home page at:
<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nhoki>

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<http://www.twitter.com/usnho>

Commanding Officer's Goals for the New Hospital Transition

In preparation for and during the hospital transition, the Commanding Officer has established the following transition goals for USNH staff:

- Thorough and preemptive planning
- Uninterrupted delivery of services during the transition
- Safely relocate assets to the new facility
- Successful setup and delivery of care at the new facility

For more information about the transition goals and your role in the transition process, talk with your Departmental Transition Representative.

USNH 2012 – 2013 holiday leave dates announced

The Commanding Officer has released USNAVHOSP OKINAWA NOTICE 1050, announcing the authorized leave dates for the upcoming Christmas and New Year holiday period.

- **1st Leave Period:** 0730, Dec. 17 through 0730, Dec. 29, 2012.
- **2nd Leave Period:** 0730, Dec. 29 through 0730, Jan. 10, 2013.

For more information on holiday leave periods as well as upcoming holiday routine observances, refer to USNAVHOSP OKINAWA NOTICE 1050.

Chaplain's Corner: Twinkies, root beer, & God

Lieutenant Commander Russell A. Hale, Deputy Command Chaplain, U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa

It is an awfully busy time at USNH; lots of promotions for our staff, Chief Selectees are learning the secrets of the Goat Locker, advancement exams are underway, PCS season is winding down, children are back in school, and in a few short months we will begin moving from Camp Lester to the new hospital on Camp Foster. Simply stated, there is a lot of transition occurring in all of our personal and professional lives. And with change or transition comes friction; some of it may be institutional in origin, but some of it may be personal. Either way, it can be uncomfortable and begin to wear on a person. This happens at different levels, of course. For example, patience may grow thin when deadlines are given via the institution that causes conflict with your personal life. Or, the conflict between individuals becomes personal because of institutional requirements that require cooperation—and for whatever reason, you seem to be doing most of the cooperating! Take the time to personally renew your energy, or strength, despite the business of the times and season. I believe the following story illustrates the importance of renewal.

A little boy wanted to meet God. He knew it was a



long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with Twinkies and a six-pack of Root Beer and he started his journey. When he had gone about three blocks, he met an elderly man. The man was sitting in the park just feeding some pigeons. The boy sat down next to him and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the man looked hungry, so he offered him a Twinkie. The man gratefully accepted it and smiled at boy. His smile was so pleasant that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered him a root beer. Again, the man smiled at him. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word.

As it grew dark, the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave, but before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the man, and gave him a hug. The man gave him his biggest smile ever. When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You

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OMBUDSMAN: Creating a positive buzz

Christine Peterson, Command Ombudsman, U. S. Naval Hospital Okinawa

As we start to prepare and plan the big move to our gorgeous new hospital, it is important that we not only focus on what our new spaces will look like (cause we are all dying to know); we need to involve our patients in this historical event as well.

How do we do this? **Involve your patients** by simply asking "Have you heard that the hospital is moving to a brand new facility on Camp Foster early next year?" Most have some idea, but this simple question, opens that door, and makes you more approachable for them to ask you questions...and trust me, they will have plenty!

When you are addressing their questions make sure that you **focus on the good**. For example, if someone asks about the Pharmacy, you can say "Oh, it is beautiful, and so easy to find right next to the Quarterdeck. There will be 60 seats in the waiting area and 5 service windows." Promote all of the positive aspects of our move. It can be the increased size of the hospital, and parking spaces, the updated modern building and equipment, or just a simple mention of a flat screen TV in



every patient room. Remember, it is the "little things" that make people happy.

Be open-minded about the various things that they may ask you. Just because you might work in HRD, does not mean that a spouse might ask you all about the new MICC (Mother Infant Care Center). Please never say something like: "I don't know, that is not my department." No matter what your position may be here at the hospital, be prepared for all sorts of questions with exciting tidbits about various aspects of the new facility.

Have a complete understanding of the transition to the new facility, so that you can help the patients **understand the change...** because not all people are big fans of change (even if it does involve an awesome new hospital). If someone grumbles to you about our current facility "being just fine, and we don't need to waste money on another," remember to smile, and wait for them to finish. Go on to mention something like: "We have loved and maintained this hospital but, it was determined that our 54 year old building



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Occupational & Operational Stress Control 101

Lt. Ashley N. Clark, USNH Okinawa Clinical Psychology Staff

The hum of the summer cicadas is gone, though it has been replaced. The excitement of the new hospital is buzzing around these days, but like other major milestones, excitement can be accompanied by worry and stress. When we anticipate the arrival of a baby, PCS to a different duty station, or move in to a new home, there is significant preparation and generally some unforeseen obstacles that require patience and flexibility. So what happens when you transplant a Naval hospital, its staff, equipment, and patients to brand new facilities on a nearby base? Occupational and Operational Stress Control 101.

Our Commanding Officer has four major objectives for the transition. With thorough and preemptive planning we hope to anticipate most of the major hurdles in advance. This still provokes questions for staff and patients - will there be enough office spaces? Is there more parking? Meanwhile, teams are being dispatched to perform inventories in our workplaces and a few services are

being supplemented with additional staff. For some, having unanswered questions, packing personal items, or adapting to new personnel and policy changes can be frustrating.

It is expected that there will be no interruptions to the delivery of services during the transition. This means that staff could be working particularly long hours. Some services will be operating in dual locations temporarily, and for others, the move will happen in rapid progression so that patients can be seen the next business day. This leaves potential for stress injuries due to wear-and-tear, burnout, and fatigue.

During the move, safety is a priority as assets are relocated to Camp Foster. While efficiency and patient access to care are always a concern, the Transition Team also wants to ensure that our people and equipment have a smooth move. Looking out for our shipmates during major evolutions is something we learn from the first day of military training. Physical injuries or pain can negatively impact our mission readiness, our ability to provide quality care, and can lead to time away from

the job which puts more burden on others.

Ideally, there will be successful setup and delivery of care upon arrival to the new facility. With cooperation from all hands and a dose of patience, small glitches or setbacks will be manageable. Perhaps the phone does not work at first try or the printer is not connected; these can be viewed as relatively minor inconveniences if we are still able to meet our patients' expectations for treatment.

Most of us joined the military community as active duty members or civilian employees because we appreciate challenge, discipline, and overcoming adversity. The transition to our new hospital presents such an opportunity to rely on teamwork, look out for shipmates who are not taking care of themselves, seek adequate rest in advance of the move, and practice self-care. Stay actively involved in your personal hobbies to relieve job-related stress. Then, just think—you will be part of Navy Medicine history!

New BEQ offers privacy, comfort and more

HMC Robert L. Loomis, DFA Senior Enlisted Advisor

Shipmates, I am excited! Every Friday we inspect our BEQ buildings and we understand the status of the BEQ. Our BEQ staff works tirelessly keeping some very old buildings up to standards. I want to assure the USNH enlisted staff that the days of living in antiquated conditions will soon come to a close.

The new BEQ adjacent to the new hospital on Camp Foster is



the answer to all your concerns. I have personally visited the new facility and this is what residents can expect:

- Private bedroom with a door that can be locked for privacy adjoined with a common area with a kitchenette, refrigerator and head
- Built in closet, a desk, dresser, and bed with a TV stand in each room
- New bath and showers shared by two Sailors not four
- Climate control throughout the BEQ maintaining a comfortable temperature and no mold
- There is a new spacious lounge on each deck with new furniture and a male/female head
- The lounge on the First and Third deck have kitchens and large refrigerators and the lounges on the



Second and Fourth deck have vending machines and ice machines

- There are new laundry rooms with 12 brand new washer/dryer combos on each deck

The command is concerned about staff living conditions and wants to provide its Sailors with the best to help them unwind after a long day of work. Shipmates, prepare for the privacy and clean living conditions you deserve. You earned it!

USNH Okinawa takes care of families

Brian J. Davis, USNH Okinawa Public Affairs and A1C Brooke P. Beers, 18th Wing Public Affairs

CAMP LESTER, Japan- The military likes to run on schedules. It allows for a streamline of production and quality control, but babies do not follow those guidelines. Toss a few more factors into the mix like spouse deployments, health issues, and living thousands of miles from family support that people living stateside take for granted. Put it all together and the idea of having a baby in Okinawa can seem complicated, daunting, and for some, downright scary.

U. S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Okinawa serves a military community where, due to the island's relative isolation, residents tend to look to each other to build support networks that serve as their extended families. The caregivers at the hospital find themselves in the unique position of both providing a vital service and being part of the close-knit community they serve.

The entire fifth floor of U. S. Naval Hospital Okinawa on Camp Lester is devoted to the business of bringing new lives into the world. Activity on the fifth floor runs the gamut from prenatal care at the Obstetrics/Gynecology Clinic, through Labor and Delivery and finally winding up at the Post-Partum Ward.

USNH Okinawa consistently delivers an average of 100 babies per month in the Labor & Delivery (L&D) Unit, a number that takes into account mothers from families assigned to Okinawa as well as those that traveled to the island for specialized care. With that kind of operating tempo, there's always something going on in the unit's five delivery rooms and two operating rooms. For the 16 nurses and 15 hospital corpsmen that work on L&D, down time is rare.

There is also a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), staffed by the Air Force's 18th Medical Operations Squadron and an integral part of the hospital's fifth floor team. Within the NICU, a staff of four neonatologists, 13 medical technicians and 18 neonatal nurses take care of those babies that don't yet understand the concept of a schedule and tend to arrive early.

"We all are a team," said Capt. Don Henson, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) nurse. "It's not just one baby and one tech. It's all of us helping."

An average of 1,000 babies are born a year on the hospital's fifth floor and about 200 newborns make a trip to the NICU due to being premature or ill. U. S. Naval Hospital Okinawa doesn't just serve the military community on Okinawa, either. Pregnant moms with complications or multiple births travel to the hospital from around the region, where they are put up at the Stork's Nest cottages behind the hospital and monitored closely throughout pregnancy, delivery, and recovery.

Every year, around 45 babies a year are transported to Okinawa from throughout the Pacific region for intensive care.

"I can't say enough about this staff," said Angela Nandin, first time mom and recent patient at the hospital. "Our care was phenomenal," she said.

Angela's husband, Air Force Tech. Sgt. John Nandin,

18th Mission Operation Squadron, was deployed less than a month after they found out Angela was expecting. For the majority of her pregnancy with their twin boys, John was gone. Shortly after returning to Okinawa he was injured in a skateboarding accident, finding himself under the care of the hospital's Orthopedics Department. His injuries required him to travel to Hawaii for elbow surgery.



John and Angela Nandin pose with their twin boys, Daniel and Joseph. (Photo by A1C Brooke Beers)

"During a period of time, we were all patients here," John laughed.

Angela remained behind in Okinawa. With the complications she was experiencing, her doctors considered it too risky for her to travel.

"Pregnancy was so emotionally draining because I was here by myself," said Angela. Throughout the course of her prenatal care, Angela recalls how heavily she relied not only on her friends, but also on one of her physicians, Cmdr. Elizabeth Tipton, for emotional support along with her prenatal care. "Dr. Tipton played the role of my mom," she said.

At any given time, around 500 women are under the care of the hospital's Obstetrics and Gynecology (OB/GYN) department. Along with the normal OB/GYN business of monitoring the health and development of normal pregnancies, the department also boasts a robust capability for handling complicated pregnancies and multiple births. Tipton, a Maternal-Fetal Medicine Specialist, finds herself in demand not only in Okinawa but around the Pacific as she periodically travels to bases in the region to provide care where her specialty isn't locally available. In fact, she was seeing to patients on an installation in mainland Japan when Angela went into labor. Over the course of Angela's prenatal care Tipton got to know the Nandins quite well, including both John and Angela's parents before they even left the United States to be in Okinawa with their children.

"I knew the extended Nandin family before they ever reached the island because of the support they were giving Angela during her high risk twin pregnancy coupled

USNH Okinawa takes care of families

Brian J. Davis, USNH Okinawa Public Affairs and A1C Brooke P. Beers, 18th Wing Public Affairs

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with the challenges she faced with having a deployed spouse," said Tipton.

"Two days after [John's] surgery, I went to my doctor's appointment," Angela said. "And my doctor told me that I was going into labor." Due to complications she was experiencing, the babies would arrive early and Lt. Cmdr. Kellye Hoffman, the physician handling the delivery, would need to perform an emergency cesarean section to save Angela and safely deliver her babies.

The day Angela went into labor, her pregnancy was at exactly 33 weeks and 1 day of gestation, a month short of what's considered a normal pregnancy of 37 weeks. Her blood pressure was way too high, and her doctors were worried.

Thinking about the twins, Angela was more than worried. She was scared.

Angela feared more for the lives of her babies than her own. As she was wheeled passed the nurse's station, a radio, tuned to the local AFN station, was playing Luther Vandross' "Here and Now". It was John and Angela's wedding song.

Taking that as a sign, Angela looked at Hoffman and said, "I trust you."

The Nandins and Hoffman had found themselves becoming more attached at every appointment. "Being pregnant without family support is difficult, especially when you are overseas," said Hoffman. "I try to care for all of my patients as if they are family," she said.

"If we had had a girl, we would have named her after Dr. Hoffman," said Angela. "She saved our lives."

With the support of the Labor & Delivery staff Angela remained calm while she waited on her husband's arrival. Present throughout the delivery was Lt. Sarah A. Jagger, a labor & delivery nurse. Her attachment to Angela gradually developed throughout Angela's previous visits to the unit for evaluation when it was thought labor might be imminent. It was her day off, but she wanted to be in the room to provide additional comfort for Angela and her family. "I came in for the delivery, and Angie did wonderful," said Jagger.

"She held my hand," said Angela.

John managed to return to Okinawa in time to attend the delivery. Twenty-four hours after he arrived at the hospital, Angela gave birth to their two sons, Joseph and Daniel.

The Nandins are quick to point out that in a normal pregnancy, parents get to take their children home soon after the delivery. But due to their boys being born five weeks early, the twins were ushered to the NICU to be given a little extra care while new mother Angela went to the hospital's Post Partum Unit to recover—without her babies.

"Normally, moms and babies go over to the couplet care unit together," said Cmdr. Alison H. Castro, Assistant Director for Nursing Services at the hospital. "When you're not able to have your babies by your side, it causes additional anxiety along with the normal hurdles you have to endure just to recover from a c-section. Our Couplet Care staff provided the care and extra emotional support necessary to allow her to recover and visit her babies as often as she wanted."

The NICU has 14 beds ready for the tiny patients but they could potentially care for as many as 24 babies. Even though that may be a lot of running around the staff still takes their time in giving their patients and parents

the time and care they need.

"We provide a lot of education to the new parents," said U.S. Air Force Capt. Rabekah Carlisle, NICU nurse. "We try to let the parents do as much as possible."

"The NICU staff went over everything with us. They taught us how to be good parents," said Angela.

Taking care of the family remained a team effort as Castro and OB/GYN nurse Lt. Colleen Blosser, both Certified Lactation Educators, provided lactation support and followed up with Angela and her babies—all three new to the art of breastfeeding—to make sure everything was going okay. "They were here every day," said Angela.

Soon, Joseph and Daniel were strong and healthy enough to be released from the hospital, and according to plan, went home with their parents where they are



The Nandin family poses with USNH Okinawa staff. From Left: Donna Nandin; Air Force Staff Sgt. Deanna Haxton, USNH Okinawa Neonatal Intensive Care Unit; Air Force Tech. Sgt. John Nandin, Daniel Nandin, Capt. Pius Aiyelawo, USNH Okinawa Commanding Officer; Joseph Nandin; Angela Nandin; Sam Micco, Angela's father; and Maj. Karen Larry, USNH Okinawa Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. The Nandins and their twin boys were patients at Camp Lester's Naval Hospital's OBGYN Clinic, Labor & Delivery Unit, Post Partum Unit, and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, where they received the extra care they needed. (U. S. Navy Photo by Brian J. Davis)

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Magic Moments

HN Ragan's commitment to my recovery from surgery is genuine and he takes the extra step to ensure that I am comfortable yet accomplishing my PT objectives and goals.

FST-7 would like to thank **IT3 Amaya** for getting the computers and printers up and running in the FST-7 Office

CS2 Aungon is a super awesome Sailor! Sacrificed his lunch time to take care of a junior Sailor with special needs.

Lt. Cmdr. Baker went out of her way to assist me in trying to get printouts of recent lab work. Due to a new policy to NOT print these out, it was not clear where to get them. After her making three phone calls, and a POC, I was able to get what I needed. Thank you!

There was a chance I had breast cancer. I had to undergo a breast biopsy. It was a very hard time to go through. The ladies at the **Breast Health Clinic** were always there by my side like family, especially when I began to pass out during the procedure. The quick skills and care carried me through the procedure along with their hopes of me being cancer-free; which I AM!

Mr. Bennett, thank you so much for making a complicated procedure easier for me.

Lt. Cmdr. Birt and the Optometry Department staff are the most professional, friendly, customer oriented optometry department I've ever had the opportunity to visit for treatment. The section is efficient and the service is top-notch

Dr. D. Bloom is an outstanding doctor. He took time to sit and talk about my medical concerns, above and beyond my expectations.

Lt. Cmdr. Cardinale was exceptionally informative and thorough during my follow up consult. He didn't rush through the visit and answered all my questions providing additional materials to educate me.

During my recovery time at the hospital, **HN Cazares** was one of the many care takers looking after me. He did an excellent job and made my baby and I very comfortable. Cazares made my stay more welcome. As a young man in the Navy, I am sure he will go on to do and accomplish great achievements. Thank you for your service.

Lt. Cmdr. Daut, thank you for being so patient with my son. You took the time to explain everything to him and you helped to make him feel very comfortable.

We would like to thank **IT3 Furmanek** for his expeditious service while installing and fixing printers in the FST-7 Office.

Mr. Gavino greeted my son and I with a smile and was very enthusiastic and helpful. He is a great individual working with kids. Thank you, Mr. Gavino, for having a positive and friendly attitude.

I had a lot of questions and **Mr. Graham** was very courteous and helpful. He even went ahead and printed what he could for me since they weren't very busy. You just don't find customer service like that everywhere.

Ms. Headman was very kind and helpful. She stopped everything else she was doing to help me out and even offered her phone number for me to give to my supervisor in case he had any questions.

We are very grateful for **Dr. Hoffman**. She has shown us a ray of light in the darkness. We are fully satisfied with her effective treatment and care. Thanks to everyone who took part in our care, like member of their own families as well. It was absolutely professional.

Mr. Jackson has been most considerate in trying to help schedule all 4 of my visits to the Radiology department as late in the day as possible. It is refreshing to know that this hospital's personnel go the extra mile to accommodate patients requests

I wanted to thank the entire **Ophthalmology staff** for opening their schedule to fit me in 3 different dates in their full schedule to care for a condition I had. They were friendly, professional and efficient in their care.

HM3 Kyle provided outstanding customer service and support when I could not reach anyone on the phone in another department.

Lt. Cmdr. Laird was friendly, thorough and kind. He listened well, answered all of my questions and even checked with me for an ongoing medical problem.

Mr. Leach was very helpful and informative about my situation. Thank you!

Lt. G. Lee continuously gives me quality medical care, detailed consultations and shows genuine interest in my medical concerns and progress. She always values me as a person, and not just another patient.

HN Lucas is a very helpful individual that makes the patients are taken care of in a timely and professional manner. I would like to thank him for a job well done.

Submitted by Mr. Al Whitt, Command Customer Relations

New hospital update: Outfitting underway

Information and photographs courtesy of the USNH Okinawa Transition Team and Navy Medicine West Detachment



Awards and Citations

Courtesy of Mr. "CJ" Caguiran, USNH Okinawa Awards Program Manager

Navy Commendation Medal

Lt. Cmdr. Hoffman
Lt. Cmdr. Webster
Lt. Crain
Lt. Udell

Navy & Marine Corps Achievement Medal

Lt. Cmdr. Eisenberg
Lt. Taft
HM1 Ahmad
HM1 Nunez
CS2 Maldonado
HM3 Correll
HM3 Egli
HN Brandly

Meritorious Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal

Cmdr. Crane

Flag Letter of Commendation

HM3 Clark

Commanding Officer's Certificate of Commendation

Lt. Cmdr. Hollis
Lt. Beeler
Lt. Cmdr. Laird
Lt. Randles
HM1 Bundalian
HM2 Tindle
HN Firaza
Mr. Angevine
Ms. Kimball-Bourgeoise
Ms. Nolan
Mr. Pittman
Ms. Takano

Special Recognition

Ms. Hirono Higa

Certificate of Appreciation

Ms. Miho Matayoshi

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REASON #903 NOT TO BE THAT GUY:



S2M2: Mentoring medicine's next generation

Cmdr. Jacqueline Pierre, Head, USNH Okinawa Optometry Department

The Science, Service, Medicine and Mentoring (S2M2) program is designed to cultivate the next generation of top quality, culturally enriched, academic physicians and scientists and to introduce students from diverse backgrounds to Navy Medicine. It is an extension of the Navy Surgeon General's Diversity outreach initiative for continued awareness and support for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) career fields. In support of this initiative, U. S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Okinawa proudly hosted eleven students from the Kubasaki High School and the Amerasian School of Ginowan City in our first annual S2M2 program from 23 to 27 July 2012.

The mission of S2M2 is to provide long term mentoring and learning opportunities to students interested in pursuing careers in healthcare, science, and service in the context of military medicine. Students spent one week in an immersion program shadowing health care professionals and rotating through various clinics throughout the hospital. To add a bit of realism to their experiences, students wore a lower arm cast for a day, learned military drill and ceremony, and prepared poster presentations on

health topics that summarized their experience in the program.

The Science, Service, Medicine & Mentoring (S2M2) program was implemented in 2004 at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS) in Bethesda, Maryland by Capt. Cynthia

was very unique as it afforded the opportunity to extend an invitation to one of our host nation schools. The students were able to collaborate and learn cultural similarities and differences amongst themselves and between the two health care systems.

USNH Okinawa staff physicians as well as interns from the hospital's Japanese Physician Intern program played a pivotal role in the success of the S2M2 program by highlighting the pathways to a career in medicine for both Japanese and American students. Historically there have been few physicians from Okinawa involved in the USNH Japanese Intern program, with the majority of participants coming from mainland Japan. The S2M2 program at USNH Okinawa will help to bridge this gap by increasing awareness of the opportunities available for Okinawan students interested in medicine.

S2M2 at USNH Okinawa is a win-win for all; it supports the Navy's diversity goals and objectives and has served as a bridge between USNH Okinawa and the City of Ginowan further enriching the educational experience for students on island.



Students from the USNH S2M2 program pose with the casts that were applied to their dominant arms for 24 hours in order to understand the inconvenience patients can experience following surgery or an injury. (U. S. Navy photo by B. Davis)

Macri as a response to a disproportionately low proportion of underrepresented minority (URM) students entering the physician work force. Staff orthopedic surgeon, Cmdr. Sonya Waters, is a plank owner of the S2M2 program and the visionary who brought the program to USNH Okinawa. S2M2 at USNH Okinawa

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know what? God's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!"

Meanwhile, the elderly man, also radiant with joy, returned to his home. His son was stunned by the look of peace on his face and he asked, "Dad, what did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I ate Twinkies in the park with God." However, before his son responded, he added, "You know, he's much younger than I expected."

As we begin this time of transition, as things start coming into place, there will inevitably be some friction. Despite our best laid plans, something will not go as planned. Stress will build, tempers may even rise but if we prepare for this, and turn away from our wants and desires and instead focus on the community effort, the Lord can renew your strength even if it's just with

Twinkies and root beer!

The Hebrew prophet Isaiah goes as far as to say... "Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is an everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary, and his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youth will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." (Isaiah 40:28-31)

In the midst of our transition, keep your priorities on God's will rather than our own; look for opportunities to be the team builder by being the team player and perhaps, you too, will find your strength renewed.

Pet visitation program begins at USNH

Lt. Cmdr. Ann Hollis, USNH Okinawa Chief Experience Officer

U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa partnered with the American Red Cross to launch the Pet Visitation Program with a cake cutting ceremony at the hospital Aug. 13.

Visits to a hospital or a medical clinic can be very diverse from patient to patient. For those of all ages, it may be a worrisome time away from the comforts of home and family, facing unfamiliar medical procedures and treatments. The use of pet visitation dogs has been shown to help reduce stress for both patients and their families.

The presence of a visitation animal can provide comfort and soothe apprehension about their visit or their pain. During a lengthy hospital stay, a dog visit can provide a diversion from the hospital routine and provide comfort to patients, resulting in optimism and happiness. For those in the acute care setting who are dealing with the tension of an illness as well as the unfamiliar environment of the hospital, these animal visitations can provide a soothing atmosphere and reduce apprehension. Is this to say a fuzzy face, cold nose and sloppy kisses are a cure all? Probably not. But pet visitation has been shown to...

- Act as a complementary modality to aid in reducing feelings of stress and anxiety caused by illness or injury
- Reduce the traumatic effects of hospitalization and make it a more positive experience
- Act as a means to open communication with withdrawn, isolated or unresponsive individuals
- Promote a non-threatening environment
- Enhance participation in occupational and physical therapy

The American Veterinary Medical Association has found that patients who participated in animal visitation have shown improvement in their cognitive, social, emo-



Elvis, a beagle owned by Lt. Cmdr Trey Hollis and Lt. Cmdr Anne Hollis, is one of the first two canine volunteers certified to participate in the program. (US Navy Photo by B. Davis)

tional and physical functions. Physiologic benefits of animal visitation include reductions in blood pressure, heart rate and pain measurements. Psychologically and socially, animal visitation has demonstrated stress and anxiety reduction, enhancement of communication and positive social interaction skills. Staff also appears to benefit from animal visitation programs, demonstrating improvements in stress level, morale and job satisfaction.

The purpose of this program at Naval Hospital Okinawa, called "Visiting Important People with Pets" (VIPP), will be to enhance both the patient and staff experience. "We care and caring is what we do best and this is a great initiative to demonstrate that we are very committed to improving the experience of care of all those entrusted to us – our warfighters, their families, and other beneficiaries," said Capt. Pius A. Aiyelawo, Commanding Officer of U. S. Naval Hospital Okinawa.

Dogs are required to pass the Canine Good Citizen test prior to volunteering at the hospital and their owners will be required to attend Red Cross orientation. All visits will be coordinated through the Office of Patient Experience. This department was established to ensure that a positive patient experience becomes part of every clinical encounter

Pet Visitation dogs provide unconditional love and acceptance. They create a unique bond with patients that has a very real healing dimension. Would you like to lend a helping paw by becoming a pet visitation volunteer?

To find out more about becoming a Red Cross volunteer or having your pet participate in the pet visitation program, contact the American Red Cross on Camp Foster at 645-3800.

If you are interested in any of these programs or have ideas on how to enhance the patient experience, contact Lt. Cmdr. Anne Hollis, Chief Experience Officer

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has reached the end of its useful life. Thus, we have built a modern health-care facility on Camp Foster that adheres to current structural standards for natural disaster such as earthquakes, typhoons, and is also out of the tsunami zone. If someone hears that the changes are for their benefit, they will be more apt to accept the change.

Lastly, sometimes it helps to **bridge change with familiar things**. By doing this, you can take away some apprehension that people may

have. A great way to make kids and adults smile would be to mention that our Koi fish will be moving with us. While fish may not be on the top of your list as "cool things" at the new hospital, please remember that our Koi fish are the highlight of going to the hospital for many children here on island. Knowing that the "pretty fishies" (as I have heard them referred to many times) will be moving to a bigger Koi pond will make children more understanding and accepting of visiting the new hospital...even if it is

just so they can see the "fishies new house."

By effectively managing the concerns, and increasing the knowledge of our patient community, our patients will be confident in our pledge to have uninterrupted services to them during the transition.

This trust in our high standards of care will increase the success of a smooth transition to the new facility, where we will continue to be the Premier Healthcare Provider of the Pacific.

Postcard from downrange



USNH Staff deployed aboard the USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) in support of Pacific Partnership 2012. Pacific Partnership is now in its seventh year and has evolved into the largest annual humanitarian civic assistance mission in the Asia-Pacific region. (Photo courtesy of HMC Lourdes B. Angevine)

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currently settling into their new routine.

The Nandins attribute their story's happy ending to not only the quality of the medical care they received, but also to the caring and support of the entire fifth floor. "I could give you one hundred names," Angela said. "Even the Commanding Officer came up to see us personally."

Sometimes caring for patients involves more than just providing medical services. A personal touch and a relationship can be just as important as medical skills to patient care.

"It's a privilege to assist families who are experiencing a complicated pregnancy, and it is especially rewarding to work with women who are so committed to giving their baby the best start possible," said Tipton.

"It was a pleasure to be Angela's OB physician. Each appointment with Angela was always a new surprise, and I was overjoyed to be able to take those steps in her pregnancy with her. I feel blessed to have been able to meet the Nandin family and bring Joey and Danny into this world. They are beautiful babies," said Hoffman.

"It was overwhelming," Said Angela recalling her ex-

periences, "and we have been so lucky with all of the support we had. I want the world to know that if you are ever stationed here [in Okinawa], this is the best place you can be."

"I truly believe that military medicine takes excellent care of our military family. The Nandin family is a shining example of military medicine at its finest," said Hoffman.

Scheduled to move into a new state of the art facility on Camp Foster in early 2013, the hospital will continue to provide quality and family centered care to our operational forces, their families, and others entrusted to us, said Capt. Pius A. Aiyelawo, Commanding Officer, USNH Okinawa. The new hospital complex will have a new Mother-Infant Care Center with 14 state-of-the-art Labor, Delivery, Recovery, and Postpartum (LDRP) rooms, professionally decorated with private baths and updated furnishings to provide an improved birthing experience for expecting mothers and their families.

Got News?

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